



U.S. Department
of Transportation

Federal Motor Carrier
Safety Administration

Administrator

400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

Refer to: MC-RI

Dear <MCSAP Coordinator>:

Through our partnership in the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP), the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) shares a safety goal with the States to reduce the number and severity of crashes involving large trucks and buses on our Nation's highways. To meet our common goal, it is essential that uniform, complete, accurate and timely information be collected and reported to FMCSA on these crashes. Based on FMCSA analysis of crash data in our files, the States appear to be using varying criteria to report crash information. In order to assure that there is common basis for the data the States provide, I would like to clarify which crashes should be reported to FMCSA.

Since 1992, States have been uploading truck and bus crash data to FMCSA through SAFETYNET. The reporting criteria and the data items were developed by the National Governors' Association (NGA) and endorsed by the National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives, the Traffic Records Committee of the National Safety Council, the Transportation Research Board and the Federal Highway Administration. The data items are commonly referred to as the "NGA Data Elements". In 1999, FMCSA made some slight modifications to the truck and bus definitions. We are proposing no changes, just clarifications, at this time.

Enclosure 1 provides the criteria the States should use in selecting truck and bus crashes to report to FMCSA. Enclosure 2 is a listing of frequently asked questions that may aid in the decision of which crashes to report. Enclosure 3 provides the procedure for entering crashes without carrier identification into SAFETYNET.

We recognize that the collection and reporting of crash data is a statewide responsibility involving more than just the State MCSAP agency. We are committed to working with you to inform the other highway safety officials in your State, including the traffic records department, statewide law enforcement personnel, and SAFETYNET staff, of the importance of this information and what needs to be collected and reported. We also are committed to working with you to identify potential funding sources and to assist with your training needs to improve data quality.

We hope this information is useful to you. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Patricia Savage at 202-366-0077 or via e-mail at patricia.savage@fmcsa.dot.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Original signed by Annette M Sanberg
On April 2, 2004

Annette M. Sanberg

Enclosures (3)

cc: Division Administrators
Field Administrators
Associate Administrator

Which Truck and Bus Crashes Does FMCSA Want?

Report a crash to FMCSA via SAFETYNET if it involves:

- Any truck having a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of more than 10,000 pounds or a gross combination weight rating (GCWR) over 10,000 pounds used on public highways,
OR
- Any motor vehicle designed to transport more than eight people, including the driver
OR
- Any vehicle displaying a hazardous materials placard (regardless of weight)
[NOTE: This criterion assumes that an officer at a crash site may not be familiar with the Federal Hazardous Materials Regulations (Specifically, 49 CFR Part 172). If an officer or associate is knowledgeable in those, any vehicle discovered to be transporting hazardous materials without a required placard should also be included.]

AND

- That vehicle is involved in a crash while operating on a roadway customarily open to the public which results in:
 - A fatality: any person(s) killed in or outside of any vehicle (truck, bus, car, etc.) involved in the crash or who dies within 30 days of the crash as a result of any injury sustained in the crash;
 - An injury: any person(s) injured as a result of the crash who immediately receives medical treatment away from the crash scene¹; OR
 - A tow-away: any motor vehicle (truck, bus, card, etc.) disabled as a result of the crash and transported away from the scene by a tow truck or other vehicle.

EXCEPT

Crashes that involve:

- A personally-owned truck or passenger vehicle meant for personal use only as the sole vehicle meeting the criteria above, OR
- A driver with a disease condition (stroke, heart attack, diabetic coma or epileptic seizure) and no other injury or damage occurs,² OR
- Deliberate intent (suicide, self-inflicted injury, homicide, etc.), with no unintentional injury or damage³.

¹ If an injury is initially reported to FMCSA on a crash report and the injured party dies within 30 days, an updated report should be uploaded to FMCSA.

² Defined in the American National Standard Institute – “Manual on Classification of Motor Vehicle Traffic Accidents” (ANSI D1.6, Section 2.4.1)

http://www.publicsafety.ohio.gov/ANSID16_1.PDF
<http://hazmat.dot.gov/regs/172.704.htm>

³ Defined in the American National Standard Institute – “Manual on Classification of Motor Vehicle Traffic Accidents” (ANSI D16.1, Section 2.4.2)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Does FMCSA want only crashes involving commercial motor vehicles?

A: No. FMCSA wants all the crashes that meet the criteria in Enclosure 1, including these where a non-commercial vehicle is the only one that meets the criteria.

Q: Which non-commercial vehicle crashes does FMCSA want?

A: Crashes reported should include those involving Federal, State and local government-owned vehicles – such as transit buses, school buses, garbage trucks, military vehicles and snowplows – and vehicles rented or leased by individuals to transport personal goods. Here are a few examples:

- A school-owned vehicle transporting students to and from school or school-related activities
- A government-owned motor vehicle transporting property or people
- A U-Haul or Ryder truck, rented/leased to move one's own household goods

Q: Can you give me some examples of situations that should not trigger a crash report for FMCSA?

A: A few examples include:

- A horse rancher transporting hay bales for his own use from his pasture on one side of the road to his stables on the other side in a truck with a GVWR over 10,000 pounds.
- A homeowner carrying recyclables to a drop-off point in a personally-owned pickup truck with a GVWR over 10,000 pounds
- A large family of 10 persons taking a trip in the family's 12-person van
- A personally-owned pick-up truck hauling a boat or horse trailer, with a GCWR in excess of 10,000 pounds
- A family operating a recreational vehicle

Q: Should a crash be reported to FMCSA if the driver of the vehicle that meets the criteria in Enclosure 1 does not have a Commercial Drivers License (CDL)?

A: Yes. A driver of a truck between 10,001 to 26,000 pounds or a bus with 9 to 15 seats is not required to have a Commercial Drivers License (CDL). However, crashes for these vehicles are included in the criteria in Enclosure 1 and should be reported to FMCSA.

Q: Does FMCSA want crashes for trucks and buses used by a business to transport its own property or people?

A: Yes. Crashes should be reported for both business-owned vehicles transporting their own goods (private) and vehicles transporting goods for others for compensation (for-hire). An example of a private operation is a retail furniture store using its own truck with a GVWR over 10,000 pounds to deliver its products to customers.

Q: Should a crash report be included if the only outcome is (a) a vehicle with a flat tire that must be towed from the scene because there is no spare or (b) a vehicle with a damaged headlight that must be towed because it is nighttime and no replacement headlight is available?

A: No for both cases. Since the first vehicle could have been driven away if a spare tire was available and the second vehicle could have been driven away if a replacement headlight was available, these vehicles were not “disabled”⁴ as a result of the crash.

Q: What is FMCSA’s timeliness requirements for reporting crashes?

A: The States should be reporting a crash to FMCSA within 90 days of the crash.

http://www.publicsafety.ohio.gov/ANSID16_1.PDF
<http://hazmat.dot.gov/regs/172.704.htm>

⁴ Defined in the American National Standard Institute – “Manual on Classification of Motor Vehicle Traffic Accidents” (ANSI D16.1, Section 2.3.11))

Procedures for Entering Crashes without Carrier Identification into SAFETYNET

NOTE: Both of these methods will prevent the record from being included in the calculation of a State's non-match rate.

Carrier Not Identifiable

If there is no positive carrier identification available:

- Select either Intrastate or INTERSTATE as appropriate,
- Check the "Carrier ID Unavailable" box next to MC/MX Number,
- Populate the Carrier Name, Street Address, and City Name fields with "Unknown" and
- Type "UK" in the State field and "99999" in the Zip Code field.

Non-Motor Carrier

For a vehicle which does not meet the definition of a commercial vehicle⁵:

- Select "Non-Motor Carrier" at the top of the Carrier Identification window. This will disable and clear values from the fields USDOT Number, State Census Number and Issuing State, MC/MX Number, and Carrier ID Unavailable. Additionally, the Search and Copy Search Data buttons are disabled and the field label "Carrier Name" changes to "Responsible Party".
- Enter the name of the entity responsible for the safe movement of the vehicle. This could be the name of the State or local government agency or school system. If the responsible party is a private individual, enter "Individual".
- Enter the street address, city name, state and zip code of the entity indicated above. If the responsible party is a private individual, enter "Unknown" in the Street Address and City Name fields, "UK" in the State field and "99999" in the Zip Code field.

⁵ FMCSA's definition of a commercial motor vehicle can be found in 49 CFR §390.5. Included are:

- Motor vehicles providing transportation of goods or property for others for compensation (for hire).
- Privately-owned motor vehicles providing transportation of privately-owned goods or property in furtherance of a business enterprise.
- Motor vehicles providing passenger transportation for compensation (for-hire)
- Privately-owned motor vehicles providing passenger transportation in furtherance of a business enterprise.

